

FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING

By LACDMH Disaster Services Unit

September is National Emergency Preparedness Month and the Disaster Services Unit challenges you to take the first step in preparedness by developing a family emergency plan. Government employees are all Disaster Services Workers (DSW) and must work following disasters. To ensure you can report to work, you should prepare your family. Below are some planning considerations to jumpstart your family emergency planning:

- **Local Hazards:** Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play.
- **Meeting Places:** Establish meeting places inside and outside your home, as well as outside the neighborhood in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.
- **Contact Information:** Know how to contact each other if separated. Everyone should have emergency contact information in writing and saved on cell phones.
- **Out-of-Area Contact Person:** Choose an out-of area contact person as it may be easier to text or call long distance if local phone lines are overloaded or out of service.
- **Escape Routes:** Determine escape routes from your home. Identify two ways out of each room.
- **Evacuation:** Plan what to do if you have to evacuate. Practice evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on your map in case roads are impassable.
- **Temporary Shelter:** You may choose to go to a hotel/motel, stay with friends or relatives in a safe location, or go to an evacuation shelter, if necessary. Decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there.
- **Pets:** Plan ahead for your pets. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels/motels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes.
- **Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs (AFN):** Consider the needs of family members with a disability or AFN in all aspects of planning. For example, you may need extra medication (e.g., insulin), spare eyeglasses, walkers, etc.
- **American Red Cross:** If your community experiences a disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well website to let your family and friends know you are safe. You may also call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) and select the prompt for "Disaster" to register yourself and your family.
- **Additional Research:** If you want additional information, visit www.ready.gov .

Lastly, write up a brief 1-2 page family emergency plan and consider using this template: http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/FamEmePlan_2013.pdf. Like every plan, it's only effective if everyone knows of it. So, make sure to discuss it with your family! ***During a disaster, YOU make the difference!***